

BASEMENT

# PACIFIC WEEKLY

Apr 2 '40

**A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION**

**AUGUST 12, 1935**



**HARRY BRIDGES TALKS**

Aug 31 '35

**WITH HARRY CONOVER**

Sep 17 '35

**FASCIST SNIPING AT  
YOUTH CONGRESS**

**BY PROF. HARRY C. STEINMETZ**

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**PACIFIC WEEKLY**

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# PACIFIC WEEKLY

## A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

VOLUME III

MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 1935

NUMBER 6

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### NOTES AND COMMENT

#### LISTEN, POKER FACE

IF WE were you, Helen Wills Moody, we would start suit for libel immediately against Carolyn Anspacher of the San Francisco Chronicle. Also would we grasp a racquet firmly in our true right hand and face Carolyn with, "All right, old girl, now call me 'Toots'."

#### RELIGIOUS NOTE

IN THE role of Father Junipero Serra in the Serra Pageant of next month in Carmel, Byington Ford, commander of the American Legion Post, chairman of its subversive activities committee and leader in Company A of the vigilantes last year, will depict the quiet, tender spirit, sympathy and understanding of the old Franciscan father. Through him will be relayed the Christian message of peace and goodwill.

#### FOUL AFTER FOUL

LIKE a wild, mad prizefighter the Examiner has ceased even to place its blows with any conformity at all to the rules and its repeated fouls are so clear and open that it has ruled itself out of any consideration as a decent newspaper. The latest example of this was its two-columned headlined story on Friday, August 2. Under a Washington date-line on the front page it declared: "CLEAN UP REDS, IS ROOSEVELT'S ORDER", and proceeded in the story following to tell its readers that the President "has ordered the Labor Department to smash the Red Movement on the West Coast".

Of course, any newspaperman could recognize the story as a fake, outside and beyond the counterfeit taint given it by the by-line at the top: "(Copyright, 1935, by Universal Service)" which, as a Hearst-owned service, brands anything underneath it as probably 90 per cent untrue. But where a newspaperman would instantly see the probable fake is in the fact that there were no direct quotations from anyone. A story as important as this would naturally call for authoritative text, a

direct quote or a direct statement of responsibility. This was lacking, and on the face of it the story was completely false.

The next day, Saturday, the Chronicle carried an Associated Press dispatch from Washington in which it was declared that "President Roosevelt said today that he had never heard of suggestions the Labor Department seek to eliminate the radical wing from the longshoremen's union on the Pacific Coast." He had made his statement in answer to queries regarding the Universal Service "news".

#### VIGILANTES ADVANCE

VIGILANTE action in California reached a peak this week. First the apple-pickers at Santa Rosa struck from their less-than-living wage, and a vigilance committee of 250 ex-servicemen, formed from the surrounding towns, broke up their meetings and said they would "see" that apple picking and packing went on. The vigilantes did not offer to pick the apples at the coolie wage paid.

At Yreka a mob lynched a murder suspect "because the law was too slow" and the District Attorney commended them. "Patriotic citizens" have commended them. The law is too slow, too unsure, too . . . anything that will rationalize these citizens' fascist desire to be approved for their actions outside the law. The ground continues to be prepared for Hitlerism.

And an able assistant to these preparations was Paul Scharrenberg, Secretary of the State Federation of Labor. He was star speaker at a meeting of police chiefs and Legionnaires at Oakland last week. He denounced militant labor with the best of the oppressors of it. Mr. Scharrenberg may have forgotten for the moment (or did he?) that when these same police come to throw their tear gas bombs and shoot their pistols at picket-lines they will hardly wait to see if the men hit are militant or conservative, rank and filers, or A. F. of L. officials. If Mr. Scharrenberg were ever to be found on a picket-line with his men he might even run into a tear gas bomb himself. But he still pursues the disastrous policy of the lesser evil—police and State officials are preferable to honest and fighting workers, and especially honest and loyal labor leaders.

#### WHAT IS HAPPENING

DAY after day the capitalist, employers' press of San Francisco is attempting to drive into the consciousness of its readers that sporadic, intermittent strikes and labor agitations are keeping the waterfront of the city in a turmoil and preventing the settling down of commerce in the port. Day after day it is emphasizing that these spasmodic troubles are being caused by the radicals in the labor unions. It provides nothing in the manner of an explanation of the direct cause of this continued agitation other than that it is carried on by the "Reds" and apparently for no other purpose than the desire to foment trouble for the love of trouble.

The truth is that waterfront labor in San Francisco is well aware of the maxim that "Eternal Vigilance is the price of liberty" or comfort, fair treatment and enough to eat. The history of the battles between capital and labor prove that given a free rein employers will pay only what they are compelled to pay, will slash wages at every opportunity and gather



in all the profits they can squeeze out of their commerce. The waterfront employers of San Francisco declare that the agreement reached after the strike of last year is being violated by these small labor flare-ups while the truth is that the intermittent labor agitations are caused by the desperate need to save for labor what it has managed to obtain and to prevent inroads into its gains by petty and persistent violations of the agreement by the employers themselves. The employers will individually take advantage of every opportunity to break agreements while screaming through the capitalist press against labor agitation which seeks to prevent them from so doing. Also, which is more important, the employers take advantage of agreements to try to compel labor to knife itself in another sector of the battle.

The trouble over the matter of unloading the ships which have come from strike-areas is a case in point. The loyal longshoremen of San Francisco refuse to work these ships because working them would be the same as stabbing in the back the workers who are seeking justice in the ports where these ships were loaded by scab labor. It is a natural, a laudable attitude to take and despite the efforts of the Hearst press and the *Chronicle* of San Francisco to make it seem a violation of agreements with the waterfront employers, the rank and file of the public of the bay section are in sympathy with labor in this manifestation of human brotherhood.

### THE PABCO SITUATION

IN THE current "exposé" of Communist activities in California, the Hearst papers included an attack on the radicals at the Pabco plant in Oakland. We do not know whether any communists are operating there, but it is one of the logical places in the East Bay area for them. And it would be astonishing if conditions did not breed Reds in this plant.

A federal investigator, studying company unions in this state, reported to the Department of Labor that the Pabco union was one of the greatest shams he had come across. The officials of the plant claim that the workers are completely satisfied, but the workers, when they are not afraid of reprisals, have another story. They complain of the speed-up, of unsanitary toilet facilities, of having to eat their meals in the locker-room where they also change their grimy work-clothes,

of being dismissed after one hour's work at high-speed rush. Many, though bitter, have no avenue of protest. The monthly bulletins of the meetings between employers and company union representatives are treated with glum passivity or open derision. And with reason. The meetings are but farces of "bargaining". Proposals for a week's vacation were tabled for months, until finally a concession was made—two days' vacation with pay for employees who had worked more than three years.

Why was the Pabco plant singled out in this exposé? Might it have something to do with the fact that their docks were used last summer to unload ships tied up in San Francisco harbor by scab labor, and the fact that the plant is reported to be suitable for war purposes?

### SCHARRENBERG SPEAKS OUT

AS A spokesman for the California Federation of Labor, I . . .

( . . . but in the eyes of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific he stands condemned and expelled . . . )\*

"It is the avowed purpose of communists to destroy the American Federation of Labor . . ."

(Scharrenberg . . . wilfully neglected his duty . . . by calling a strike of tanker seamen . . . The calling of this tanker strike was nothing more than a deliberate attempt to wreck the Maritime Unions on the Pacific Coast . . . )\*

The labor faker, expelled from his union by a vote of 17,000 seamen, poses on the platform. On one side of him sits the chairman of the "huge" anti-red meeting, Chief of Police Bodie Wallman of Oakland. On the other, Joseph R. Knowland, publisher of the scab *Oakland Tribune*. Behind them are ranged dignitaries of the church and American Legion, unidentified persons of considerable importance, banners, and uniformed ladies from Legion auxiliaries. The audience of peace officers, Legionnaires and their wives clap apathetically.

There is a curiously mechanical air to the whole gathering. Speaker after speaker (police chiefs, labor fakers and major generals) introduce the same two themes. "Many people do not realize . . ." "We must scotch this snake before its fangs are embodied in the body politic." (This is Knowland, who has a curious difficulty with the English language.) Concrete proposals are scarce. Everyone is bewildered. Great sensation is produced when the existence of the Young Communist League is revealed. (This will annoy our friends of the Y. C. L.) The only immediate policy is Knowland's, who praises Hearst, advocates repressive legislation, and announces with horror that at the last legislative session an attempt was made to repeal the Criminal Syndicalism Act. This he regards as a deep-laid plot on the part of Moscow.

But we all wait for Scharrenberg. Fascism on the part of great newspaper publishers, major generals in the Marine Corps, and dignitaries of the American Legion is nothing new; but Scharrenberg—ah, we wait for labor to enter the fight! (What if he does retain his position in the State Federation by a vote of 4 to 2 members of the Office Employees Association?) The Chief of Police makes a rather restrained introduction. (After all, Scharrenberg was a labor man once.) He gets up. He speaks.

It becomes apparent that Scharrenberg dislikes Harry

\*From Sailors' Union pamphlet, *The Truth about Paul Scharrenberg*.

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Bridges. "If Harry doesn't like it in America, why doesn't he go back to Australia?" We discover that Bridges wants, not increased wages and better working conditions for his men, but the overthrow of the government and world revolution. "Bridges takes his orders direct from District 13 of the Communist Party." Moreover, he is a coward. "Bridges quit in New York, quit like a dog." Surrounded by policemen and Legionnaires, the barking dog shows his teeth. But has Scharrenberg been seen on the waterfront since his expulsion? Did he even appear at the Berkeley Summer School for Workers to deliver his course of lectures?

The routine is varied. He quotes a bulletin of the Soviet Chamber of Commerce in regard to the proportion of women in heavy industry. "My friends, are we going to send our women into the coal mines?" (Wives in the audience applaud.) Bridges again. "Harry has never paid much attention to constitutions or agreements." He threatens. "Are we going to tolerate this? In any other country he would have been disposed of. He wants to destroy the country." The threat becomes open. "There will arise a Fascist party like those of Italy and Germany." Of course, the American Federation of Labor does not want Fascism, but . . . says this expelled faker.

There is a moral here. Harry Bridges, president of District 2 of the Maritime Federation, was in Washington fighting for his 16,000 workers; Scharrenberg, the broken traitor, mouths empty words to a small and stuffy meeting of "respectable citizens". (There have been columns on columns of publicity in the metropolitan press for days.) We leave in the middle of the major general's speech. Nothing will come from this . . . One thing more. There are numbers of police scattered through the hall. But the precaution is in vain. All the longshoremen are working tonight.

## LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

SOMETIMES IT looks as if Mussolini, who was a red before he became a Fascist dictator, is out to make our system ridiculous and impossible. He is very intelligent, you know; one of the few practical historians I have met in the conscious practice of history, that we call statesmanship. He despises "respectable" humanity enough to be capable of satirizing man, not in a book, but in action. And that would be new and insulting enough to tempt him.

THE SEVENTH World Congress of the Communist International is realistic, not fanatical, when it comes out for the United Front against War and Fascism—with anybody. That puts the fight where it really is. First we must beat the open Capitalist Dictatorship; first. Then—the rest.

THAT MONKEY who was frozen and revived cured of tuberculosis holds out no hope for the depression and for the human race. The experimenter confesses that the brain was not affected. A frozen human would probably come back to life still believing that there are two sides to every question.

"SOAK THRIFTY" tax bill is on the way, it passed the House and goes now to the Senate to be soaked by the representatives of the rich and thrifty as "confiscatory". Horrific

word, that, and correct. But we can't afford a scientific taxation system. We should never have allowed the rich to become so rich, but since we did and do we must confiscate. If they'll let us. If they will let us.

DISMISSING A CHARGE of neglect of duty against one captain of police, the President of the San Francisco Police Board announces that hereafter the orders of the Chief of Police must be obeyed. I hope the cops understand that. I do, and I'm no policeman, nothing but an ex-police reporter.

BEGGARS ARE calling to tell us, in other words, that the depression is not quite over.

NOT ONLY the radio, book publishers also are getting into the news business. The newspapers are retreating to propaganda and the reporters are becoming "responsible". That used to express an ideal almost unattainable: the seers and writers of news were to consider the effect of what they reported, of what happened, and "fix" it. Some of them who did not like this idea went to the magazines and now that the magazines have become responsible, the irresponsible reporters have backed up to books. They are authors and book publishers are due to become statesmen with some sense of their "responsibility".

THERE WAS a man in here the other day, a resident of this community, who has written a book showing that Christ was a communist. He discovered this when he was wrecked in the Arctic and had nothing to read but the Bible. I discovered that once and I wasn't wrecked till I tried to tell the Christians about it. I couldn't do it; I'd like to see him try. He is no friend of mine—yet; only a fellow citizen of Carmel. But he is not a vigilante—yet.

HARRY BRIDGES must be an honest man. I don't know the waterfront leader, never met him, but I can tell that he is loyal to the workers who trust him. The bosses and A. F. of L. officials hate him. My test developed in the practice of a life-time of muck-raking proves my conviction and makes it a "prejudice". Our world is down on an honest man.

Once when I was going to the revolution in Mexico, I had to choose a side. One couldn't very well cross the line in fighting Mexico; too dangerous. My young friend Jack Reed had gone to Villa's side. But there was Carranza and his party. To make up my mind, I went down to Wall Street, got together a group of businessmen who were interested in Mexican affairs and at an intimate luncheon I asked them for advice. They were for Villa.

"He's a bandit and all that. You wouldn't expect it, but we have tried him and he's all right. But Carranza—that son of a —; you can't do a thing with him. No, Villa is our man down there."

So I knew, and I went to Mexico on Carranza's side. Carranza wasn't a clear revolutionist, didn't know how, but business hated him and with cause. When I came West to cover the old graft prosecution in San Francisco, I learned right away that Fremont Older and Francis J. Heney were hated by the "leading" businessmen, whose business was being ruined by these expositors and prosecutors of graft and crime. That proved to me that Heney and Older were at least honest men, and so I reported.

The rule I adopted was to find out what and whom the "good businessmen" were against, and stand for that. For I had learned that business was back of every party, gang, graft, crime and "evil" in our civilization. Every crook in politics



was their man, every reformer of character and power was their enemy. So I learned to trust where they distrusted.

Now the struggle has passed on from politics and government to labor, where it always was even before I recognized it. We all know that the conflict is between Labor and Capital and the signs of the struggle are the same. So when I see in the newspaper from my bed here that the businessmen who used to hate Heney and kidnap Older, are out to "get" Harry Bridges and some "reds" I know that there must be something good and faithful about that "alien", Harry Bridges, and those unidentified "reds".

IT MAY be all right for the *Chronicle* to say in big type that the waterfront is playing for a strike in the fall; it may be good politics to give the public mind that false twist. But the editors should not themselves believe it. My theory of journalism is a fine liberal conservative newspaper should know and let its readers know that Bridges and the red few are fighting off a strike, and do not want it, but believe that the bosses will force one. It helps me as a newspaper reader to know who is for and who is against the strike that is coming, like a revolution. It enables me to sit back with the bosses and laugh—laugh at the monkeys who are pulling the chestnuts out of the fire.

TO MAKE a conservative newspaper is hard these days. But it is desirable and profitable; the people would pay in cash and in worship for a paper that will show how our civilization

(business) can be saved. The spokesmen for reaction do not understand business though they are in it (not for love) and the news and facts are revolutionary. Red journalism is easy: current history is all that way. The job of the *Western Worker*, for example, is to make the news believable. Faking, any exaggeration, on a radical paper is sabotage. At present journalism faces an opportunity; it's in a stage when nobody can believe the newspapers; we have been in that stage before, but somebody always arose to cash in on it. I mean that we are in the condition out of which the great editors were born. Some kid should see it.

THE NATION last week had a muck-raking article on the shipping grafters which Miss Perkins and Asst. Secretary McGrady might well read, though it is none of their business. It's in another department, not Labor, but it might help them to know what crooks the bosses of marine labor are. They are as criminal crooks as any I ever found in any city's underworld, even in San Francisco.

YREKA HAS got down to lynching, and rather proud of it. No sex or labor in it. Just justice. And speed.

THE ETHIOPIANS prefer to be called Abyssinians. They are white men, they are Jews and they draw the color line. They repelled the Harlem Negroes who were going over to Africa to help fight Mussolini. They are Semites. And they are in a feudal state. History has something to do to them.

+

## AN INTERVIEW WITH HARRY BRIDGES

BY HARRY CONOVER

(Although reams of vilification have been heaped upon Harry Bridges by the capitalist press of California, there has never been requested from him a statement of his side of the case or his views on matters in which his activities are involved. As far as we know this is the first interview with the leader of the longshoremen to appear in any publication other than those issued by labor organizations.—Ed.)

**I**F THERE is a strike on the San Francisco waterfront next month it will be the employers, not the workers, who will cause it.

This I gathered from talking with Harry Bridges, leader of the San Francisco longshoremen, whose honest, determined and militant championing of labor has made him an outstanding figure on the West Coast.

Bridges is not "fiery" as the newspapers call him. When he speaks of the attacks made on marine workers—"his" men—you are struck by his objectivity and detachment. He is not bitter, he is rather confident and determined, and very simple. Though he is the idol of his fellow-workers, he is no ego-mani-

ac. They feel he is honest and straightforward. He talks always of what the men want, not of what he wants—consciously aware that he is but their spokesman. Last July, when a select committee of the Industrial Association was considering how to end the strike and "agitation" on the waterfront and proposed to throw Bridges in the bay, they were deterred from doing so by the knowledge that there are other longshoremen to support Bridges. His answer to my first question confirmed this impression.

"Were you after the presidency of the I. L. A., as the papers here claimed, when you went to the New York convention?"

"I was after nothing. I was simply one of three delegates from the Pacific Coast. We were under instructions from our union to present three resolutions to the convention. First, we were instructed to propose a national agreement for the longshoremen to get uniform wages, a six-hour day, thirty-hour week and control of the hiring halls. Second, we were to propose a Maritime Federation for the East and Gulf ports similar to ours out here. We wanted to have all agreements with



the employers consummated by vote of the rank and file members of the unions. Third, we were to present a resolution condemning Joseph Ryan for his attempted sell-out during the strike last summer and calling for his removal. We expected no support and got none for our resolutions—the convention was too well packed with Ryan's henchmen—but we did get them on the floor and forced Ryan to declare himself against the six-hour day and the Federation."

"Why did you not get more support than you did?"

"In the first place, the convention was illegally elected. Many of the delegates came from unions which had not held a meeting in months. New England sent no delegates from the unions—only the district council officialdom was represented. Locals in Boston thought that it was useless even to attend. As a result, steam-roller tactics were employed throughout the proceedings. We have not even been furnished with minutes of the meeting so that we do not know if our principal resolutions and those on the Labor Party, Unemployment Insurance and against Negro discrimination in the unions have been recorded. Thugs were constantly and openly used to intimidate any delegate who attempted or was inclined to support us. The *Daily Worker's* reporter was slugged and there were repeated attacks in the convention by Ryan's gangsters. The newspapermen of the metropolitan press fully saw the situation and so described it, in contrast to the misrepresentation of our San Francisco papers."

"What was the communist meeting you spoke at in New York for which Ryan attacked you?"

"I spoke at no communist meeting. I was invited to speak at two meetings, one of Local 800 of the I. L. A. in Boston, the other a mass meeting of the rank and file of the trades unions in New York on unemployment insurance. At the convention itself, a motion was made to attend this meeting and more than half of the convention delegates did attend it. The next day, Ryan accused me at great length of addressing a 'red' group. Yet I was allowed only five minutes to reply to the charge."

"In the same manner, the chair frequently refused to recognize me from the floor. On one occasion, William Green and several others were in attendance and I attempted to present our position. Ryan allowed me to speak only after the visitors had left. That's the way most of it was carried on—attacks on me and the denial to me of the right to answer charges."

"Didn't the men outside the convention see through these machine tactics?"

"They didn't have a chance. Ryan either terrorizes them or discriminates against those who question his policies. Conditions on the New York docks are even worse than they were out here before the General Strike. Many of the ships which we unload here are handled by non-union men in the East. The men stand around on the docks waiting from early hours in the morning to be picked for work and then out of the five hundred maybe a hundred who are O. K.'d by Ryan get a job. The rest just drift back home. And the hundred have to give an open kick-back every Saturday to Ryan's gang."

"How do the men on the docks feel about it?"

"Most of them are afraid to talk. Wherever I went, I was shadowed and few of them dared to talk to me although they knew me. Ryan wants to keep his racket—all of the leaders were scared last year when a rank-and-filer pulled out 20,000 teamsters from the Teamsters' Union in New York City—one third of the union against the policies of the bureaucrats. So the men on the Eastern waterfront do not know of the gains we have made on the West Coast. They refused to believe

conditions could be so good. They could not believe of the sickness and death benefits we have. They make less in a week, if they are lucky enough to get a week's work, than our men make in two days. I should say that their average wage was less than \$12 a week. I never spoke to a man who had made more than \$20 a week in the last five months. Our main task now is to convey back to them our publications so that they may know what militancy can give them in contrast to the sell-out leadership they are accustomed to."

"But aren't the employers here trying to re-establish the old conditions? What will happen after the agreements expire on September 30?"

"When that time comes, the employers will try to split the Coast unions. They will probably renew the agreements of the other ports and refuse to extend that of San Francisco. Then, at the threat of another strike, they will make an apparent capitulation—offer to renew San Francisco's contract if the present leadership is eliminated. So from the public's viewpoint, any strike here will seem to be solely over the issue of radicalism within the union. But our men have fought phoney sell-out leaders like Ryan in the past. We offered to hold an election among the men in answer to the employers' charge that the 'left-wing' in the union is a minority group. The employers did not accept the offer. The July 5 parade looked too big to them. The next one will look even bigger."



—TONY PEREZ

## WORKERS AND THE DRAMA

**A**N INTERESTING and encouraging experiment in dramatics in a workers' group is now being carried on at the Western Summer School for Workers in session in Berkeley. The director and instructor is Mr. Reinart Torsen, a charming and capable young Norwegian. His methods are simple, direct and effective. Obviously he understands his work and his people, and likes both—knows what the workers want and need, and by suggestion and leadership brings out the best in them.

The group itself, consisting of about twenty persons rang-



ing in age from the early twenties to the late fifties, deserves much of the credit. Some of its members are definitely talented, all are willing to work and to learn.

The first attempt at a performance was a reading of *Waiting for Lefty*, by Clifford Odets. Produced practically without props, and with scripts in the hands of almost all the participants, it moved along with feeling and with flashes of real dramatic ability. The audience, consisting of other students in the school, was drawn into active participation in the shouts of the taxi-drivers' union crowd.

Mr. Torsen has given his dramatic training principally through the assignment of play-writing tasks. Thus the members of the group have absorbed knowledge of dramatic construction along with that of stage technique and acting; they have thought their way through dramatic situations, and have received criticism and suggestion both from the leader and from one another.

On Saturday evening, July 27, in connection with the sessions of the Labor Institute at International House, two of the students' efforts were given a public production. A one-act play by George Hedley, entitled *The Orthodox*, was enthusiastically received by the audience. Smooth in its construction, convincing in its characterization, it was amazingly well cast and acted. With only three days from casting to production, it exhibited little of the awkwardness usually taken for granted in amateur performances.

The problem of *The Orthodox* is that of the young clergyman, acutely conscious of social injustice and eager to use his position for the making of a better world, coming under fire from his capitalistically-minded Board of Trustees. He is beset by orthodoxy on all sides—that of the Church, that of the existing economic order, and that of doctrinaire radicalism. The conclusion of the play occasioned much discussion, and inevitably will do so wherever it is presented or read: it leaves the problem roundly stated, but by no means solved. In the writer's opinion this conclusion, well timed and effectively symbolized, is the only one possible, and therefore constitutes an artistic triumph.

Robinson, the protagonist, was smoothly and capably played by Harold Smith, one of the younger group in the student body. Alternately bitter and tolerant, always bewildered, he won the sympathies of the entire audience. The part of the leading Trustee, a brusque and domineering man of business, was given convincing power by Ted Warneke, of the I. L. G. W. U. William Trautmann, fighter of labor's battles since early in the century, secured an ovation from the audience on his exit after portraying the pious, ineffective, compromising elder clergyman who is the trustee's obliging tool.

Violet Daniels, also a garment worker, was effective as the loyal but sorely troubled wife. Paul Otis, romantic and impetuous son of a wholly unromantic father, bounced in and out in the person of Joseph Bowen, Yale graduate whose diploma has as yet brought him no means of livelihood. Boris Hamin-sky turned the handicap of a foreign accent into a real asset in his representation of Lenberg, the local radical who is perhaps Robinson's most genuine friend. Even the walk-on characters displayed genuine verve in their greetings and farewells, and especially in the lifting of their eyebrows.

Miss Alberta Walker, a young Negro girl from an industrial group in Seattle, devised and produced a rhythmical pantomime called *This Way to Progress Street* which was clever, fast-moving, well-costumed and really rhythmical. Engagingly it depicted the plight of Mr. and Mrs. John Doe, victims of the milkman, baker, landlord and tailor, and brought the pend-

ulous Does and the unpaid merchants to a happy and practical conclusion in a socialized order.

Three additional plays written during the term are to be given first productions on Thursday evening. *The New Alaska*, by Irene Segrist, an office worker, deals with the Manastuska colony; William Trautmann has written a dramatic version of an episode in the "Wobbly" struggles of some years ago; and by way of recreation, Gordon Chambers, an E. E. P. teacher, presents a scene from the political and personal adventures of Charles II.

The group disbands at the end of the week, with the conclusion of the school, to various parts of the Pacific Coast. Its members have been enriched through pleasurable experience, and carry with them new knowledge and ability. It will not surprise those of us who have been in touch with the worker-students to hear of their accomplishing much in the dramatic field in their several organizations at home.

—JANICE BROOKE



## SECOND COMING

BY ROGER ROUGHTON

SO VERY few persons will look at their heads  
By holding the eyes in the fingers for rest,  
But stare at dead faces insistent on beds  
Whose owners are searching for dreams to invest.

While needles and bones are extending the skin  
The hands of the clergy are blessing the walls  
And circles of thinkers are melting down tin  
To pay for their spies and their telephone calls.

While pencils and fingers are adding up bets  
That doctors have laid and have lost in the night  
Policemen are combing the houses of yets  
For animals looking like men of the right;

Till cabinetmakers are busy again  
Designing a senate to hold all the zoo;  
A flood is expected because of the rain  
Which answered the prayers of a whitechapel jew.

The papers are printed in whiskey and blood  
And bought by the mothers who wrote all the news,  
Describing the ark that is planned for the flood  
And giving as recipes cannibal stews;

But no-one can read them because an eclipse  
Has started at sunrise and lasts till the night;  
The scorpions are acting as government whips  
And pushing a motion to censure the light.

The bill is soon passed and put into force  
By christians and cats who can see in the dark,  
But only the fishes are left to endorse  
The architect's bill for the plans of the ark.



# FASCIST SNIPING AT THE AMERICAN YOUTH CONGRESS

BY PROF. HARRY C. STEINMETZ

**H**ORSE sense would dictate that fascistic gentlemen should seek to nullify the thunder on the left of a youth convention with courtesy, interest and hospitality. Unfortunately there are few horses in Detroit and fewer gentlemen among the fascists.

Representing a membership of 1,300,000, there gathered in Detroit early last month 1205 official young delegates of 846 organizations scattered throughout most of the states. It was the second annual American Youth Congress, to which I was a delegate from the Federated Trades and Labor Council of San Diego and observer for half a dozen societies. At early count, 150 labor unions, 49 church groups, 9 political parties, and many school, community and literary groups were represented.

The Congress becomes what its members make it, and I believe the only requirements are age 18 to 30 and subscription to the Declaration of Rights of American Youth, the magnificent programmatic document evolved by the Congress. All youth organizations should be encouraged to affiliate. As a college professor and member of organized labor, I seek opportunity to learn what is going on. In Detroit I learned more than I had expected to, although I have space here only for turning on the side lights. If leftish groups recruited, it was due less to their overt pull than to the push provided by stupid reactionaries intent upon making enemies.

To begin with, tritely enough, there was the School Board. This august body refused the youngsters use of the schools. President Waldo McNutt and the Michigan hosts, the Committee of '76, campaigned astutely and went to court. Genial Judge Frank Toms gave the youngsters a clean victory, even agreeing that there is often an unfortunate distinction between common sense and legal fact, and all sessions were held in the Cass Technical high school. Victory No. 1.

The trial called Hearst's attention to the Congress so, again tritely enough, he tried to plaster it with red paint. At this juncture most of the liberals, who had lent their names in sponsorship, ran away. As a liberal who is disgusted with the spineless verbalism of my class, I am tempted to call this Victory No. 2.

Before or during the trial, I am not sure which, arrangements were made with the finest convention hotel in Detroit. Soon the manager informed officials that he had heard their Congress was naughty, so they would have to secure the endorsement of three representative bodies: the Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Trade, and the Americanization Committee of the American Legion! There followed similar experience with three other hotels before one with sufficient decency (or cupidity) could be discovered. Since the Congress was well housed, I shall call this Victory No. 3.

The Congress made arrangement with 26 restaurants for 10 per cent reduction for card-holding delegates and 5 per cent rebate to the Congress and no race discrimination. Almost unbelievably, twenty restaurants violated their promises and had to be boycotted. Even the hotel in which most delegates were housed attempted to repudiate the same sort of

pledge, but solidarity and discipline won out and afforded Victory No. 4.

Late Saturday evening, July 6, during a dance in the hotel, the corner drug store downstairs charged a Negro delegate 30 cents for a 15 cent ice cream soda, in direct violation of Michigan state law against racial discrimination. Then the store manager refused to serve Negro boys who came in with white boys, and foolishly called the police. Immediately a picket line of 600 delegates formed, and re-formed, despite the pushing and shoving of forty burly and ill-natured police. Small though it seems now, the good-natured solidarity of those youngsters, most of whom had never been on a picket line, standing firm for law and principle in the face of brow-beating opposition, was Victory No. 5.

During the height of the mêlée, a limousine dashed down the street, siren screeching, and the police made way while it careened across the sidewalk. A young man plunged out, took notes, the police cleared traffic, and the auto dashed through a service station and diagonally across the street intersection. It was a Hearst reporter. Lesson No. 6. (Lessons are or prepare for victories; my numbering is not mixed.)

Police went to get tear gas bombs to use against those youngsters who were demonstrating for law enforcement, but the drug store proprietor decided to close for the night, so the picket lines were called off. One angry officer invaded the hotel lobby and struck a boy over the back with his night stick. A Detroit delegate told the officer he did not pay taxes to support such behavior and would prefer to be struck himself rather than have his visitors so treated. The officer shouldered his way out. Virtually and in behavior these young people won Victory No. 7.

The dancing and committee meetings resumed. (With the presiding committee I was in conference sixteen hours that day.) At 1:30 A. M. my room mate, Rev. Gordon McWhirter, graduate student at U. C. and the Berkeley Unitarian School for the Ministry, and I stepped out of the hotel for a soda and a breath of air before retiring. At the entrance we met three or four other delegates and yawned pleasantly. Suddenly an officer hurtled into us, pushing us this way and that, ordering us with curses to get out or to get in, but to keep moving.

We remonstrated and McWhirter sought to take the officer's number. He was seized and jerked so violently that the skin was broken in three places on his arm, dragged down the side walk and thrust into the drug store entrance behind three or four other officers. I protested mildly and had a night stick thrust into my ribs. Immediately it was pointed out to the hotel proprietor that this had occurred on hotel property, A. C. L. U. and I. L. D. attorneys were roused from their beds, and I reported at length to the editor of the Detroit News. (Although indignant and sympathetic, he has just returned to me, without comment, an article I left him, milder than this.)

McWhirter was taken to the police station, but before threatening officiousness he budged not a whit. He talked



back Americanism to the captain, economics to the officers, and told two Negro prostitutes, brought in at this same time, what makes for prostitution under present conditions. After a half-hour he was released, having provided the Congress with Victory No. 8, a victory for which California lovers of civil rights should be grateful to him.

In the gray dawn, as I looked out my hotel window and saw fresh police step from their Fords to relieve the robots who had guarded the empty sidewalk during the earlier hours, one officer laughed as he showed a taxi driver brass knuckles that he took from his pocket, and I shivered for the fate of my country.

A few hours earlier, no one could have felt more secure in his democratic American liberty than I. In the early morning I recited to myself bitterly the impressive array of claims to civil rights in which I have long taken a false pride. Before me stretched a vast mechanized city, a system of property, heartless. Between luxury on the heights and dire poverty in the depths paraded the militarized "peace officers" whom I had seen in the riot conditions. Minions of Ford and Hearst, supported by sales taxes and other taxes always passed on to the worker and consumer, habituated to brutality, ignorant in their city pride, contemptuous of Jew and Negro—I can be pardoned for looking intently for swastikas on their blue sleeves.

Far more serious than the discontent of youngsters who face a dreary world of curtailed opportunity is the mistreatment and misunderstanding of them by oldsters. Far more menacing than the exuberant resolutions of a thousand young people is the fascism displayed by the police of Detroit.

As I stood before the hotel window that Sunday morning, reviewing the events I have chronicled here, I made my choice. No good American will be able to do otherwise. The alternative is moral and intellectual suicide.

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## ANTI-WAR IN THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL

**A**UGUST FIRST is, it is true, a day of international demonstration against War; but surely the management of the Hollywood Bowl did not consciously plan to present an intensely moving anti-war spectacle on that night. Surely Hollywood did not plan such a demonstration. In fact, on the preceding Sunday, four men were arrested on Hollywood Boulevard for publicizing the anti-war demonstration planned for August First by the Hollywood section of the American League against War and Fascism.

In spite of itself, however, the Bowl did, on Thursday night, August 1, present one of the finest pieces of anti-war propaganda ever staged in the West. Mr. Nahum Zemach and his Dance Group, in Shelling's Victory Ball, brought to the Bowl patrons a thrilling choreographic performance, as well as an effective anti-war message. The theme of the dance, a victory ball attended by the statesmen and social élite at home, against a background of marching, running, fighting, falling soldiers, lent itself beautifully to Zemach's unusual treatment: a mass chant; the colorful victory ball; the soldiers

running, deploying, fighting; back to the ball, this time with dead soldiers all about the ballroom; the soldiers rising, the ball becoming gay, even frantic, fading again to marching troops.

As effective as the dancing itself, were the lighting effects produced by throwing the shadows of the dancers, the marching men, the dying men, on the bowl "shell", giving a continuous background and furnishing the consistent mood for the entire ballet.

The contrast between Zemach's production, and the usual run of Hollywood Bowl ballets in the past, is an effective argument on the side of those who maintain, that not only may Art be propaganda (i.e., take a definite stand upon a social issue), but that it must have a clearly defined social viewpoint in order to be genuine and vital Art.

—LEE OREMONT

## THE THEATER

### HOW SMART IS CARMEL?

**F**UNNY, isn't it, how hillside grass always looks fresher and greener from a distance. So it would seem in Carmel. Innumerable times the intellectuals and lovers of the drama of that community have traveled to San Francisco, Los Angeles, and even farther, to see some professional troupe perform some talked-of play—often hardly worth the trip.

In Carmel, all summer, there has been the best, undoubtedly the best, troupe that ever visited the village—the Pinon Players. Unknown when they first arrived, they were welcomed with reserve—another bunch of amateurs, just another ham troupe. That first tilted-nose decision was knocked clean out of the mind of any one who attended their first show, *The First Mrs. Fraser*. Not amateurs performing, but a cast of well-trained professionals presenting one of the best performances seen in a long time. Their houses were bad for their four-days' production, hardly a showing in the small Playhouse (seating capacity, 266). Undaunted, the players followed with *There's Always Juliet* and the next week tried *The Inspector General*. A better showing for the latter, but not good. Then *Good-Bye Again*, followed by *Mrs. Moonlight*. Still no turn-out and still unsurpassed performances. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* got the kids out and they immediately became supporters of the Pinon Players.

*Ghosts* was offered and those few who were intellectual and intelligent enough to attend experienced one of the most emotionally thrilling experiences of their lives. Harriet Smith, a young (in her early twenties) girl from Stockton (received her M. A. at Yale) directed the show—has directed most of the shows, in fact. But for this direction she deserves greatest acclamation. And three of the Pinon Players: John Straub of Yale (Oswald), Beatrice Newport of Honolulu (Mrs. Alving), Franklin Wilbur of Stockton (Manders) in the leading roles impel unrestrained praise. Franklin Spencer of Yale did scene and costume designing for this show with the same clear conception and instinctive technique evident in all his work.

There's a reason for the excellence of these productions and a good reason: the players work hard and they know how to



work. They're young and ardent—none of them is more than 26. Team work is evident always—personal glory means nothing to any member of this troupe. Maybe that's it.

They have performed the plays of accepted and known playwrights for the past ~~six~~ weeks. Last week they gave one of their own a chance. Yancey Boone Smith, brother of Harriet Smith, wrote a three-act comedy, *Marriage Preferred*, and a Pinon cast presented it. Needless to say, Smith's fellow thespians helped make his play one of their outstanding successes.

The troupe closes its season September 15 and has tentative plans for producing *Mary Tudor*, *Whistling in the Dark* and an unannounced Broadway success between now and then.

Carmel still lies back in smug apathy but already expert followers of the stage, critics and dramatists from afar are going to Carmel and are exulting in this company. The Pinon Players are on their way to the top with firm strides.

—SARA E. REAMER

## "UNDERGROUND" DRAMA

BY WINTHROP RUTLEGE

SELDOM in history has there been a time so full of dauntless heroism as that in Russia between 1905 and 1917. The first revolution had been crushed, the mensheviks were cowering bidding for peace with the Czar and black reaction was in the saddle. The social democrats, or bolsheviks, were keeping the flame alive in their underground dens and suffering untold privation, misery and terrorism for their devotion to the cause.

It is this drama-fraught period that forms the setting for the new Soviet film, *The Youth of Maxim*, now showing to capacity audiences at the worthy little Clay International Theater. The boy Maxim, played ably by Boris Chirkov, is first seen as a careless youth sporting with his fellow factory workers.

He is awakened to the bleak truths of cruelty and oppression when a comrade is killed and the authorities attempt to prevent the factory workers from holding their own burial procession. A series of events throws him in with the underground revolutionists and he is started on a trail that leads him through prison to the status of a seasoned battler for the new life.

This transition is effectively shown and the film is replete with scenes of inspiring heroism in the face of terror. The work, however, is not such a strikingly effective dramatic presentation as was *Chapayev*. Moskovin's photography is not quite up to the usual Soviet standard and the picture, while rising to several dramatic heights during its progress, lets down slightly at the end. Here, with Maxim finally come of age, it cried for a touch of prophetic symbolism and some hint of the future that was to be built after 1917 by Maxim and thousands of other such youths who have built the Soviet Union. But it had none and so, I think, was weakened both as an artistic and as a social document.

It is, nevertheless, a worthy work, unutterably superior to our Hollywood product, and entirely worth the attention of the follower of the Soviet cinema. And it has points wherein it brings spontaneous applause from its audiences.

One's first thought after seeing W. C. Fields in *The Man on the Flying Trapeze* is one of wonderment at its title. Then

one immediately realizes that the priceless Mr. Fields is always on a flying trapeze and that the title would serve equally well for any of his vehicles.

This film is not the best of the Fields efforts, nor is it by any means the worst. The veteran comedian is still a master at portraying frustration. First we see him going to the basement to join two burglars and a policeman who are singing over his applejack barrel, and next taking an afternoon off from his office to attend a wrestling match. The burglar episode is a well-rounded farce in itself, and the film might have ended with its conclusion. It would have been perfect short. The latter portion is rather becluttered, but because of Fields' superb miming it manages to keep audience interest. Fields still is in dire need of someone who can write suitable vehicles for him.

The Warner and Hearst Brothers cannot get over their passionate love of uniforms, even in *The Irish in Us*, which teams Pat O'Brien and James Cagney in a comedy that is sometimes quite amusing and always exceedingly hokey.

Mr. O'Brien's is decked in a copper's uniform and Frank McHugh is a fireman. The third brother, Cagney, really should have been a white wings to complete the picture. But of course the Hearst-Warner sense of humor is scarcely sprightly enough for that. Jimmy instead is a budding prize-fight manager and as the picture opens, has taken Allen Jenkins in tow. We see Cagney and O'Brien falling in love with the same lass, as in *Devil Dogs of the Air*, and as usual we see Cagney winning.

The variation is that when his fighter gets drunk on the eve of the championship fight, Cagney dons his trunks and gloves and goes to glory. It's rather old stuff, but it is done at a pitch that substitutes fairly well with the audience for originality of subject matter. Just the same one feels sorry for both Cagney and O'Brien. They both deserve something better on which to whet their very worthy talents.



—GRETCHEN SCHOENINGER



# ANNIE AND THE BOURGEOISIE

BY R. H. JAMIESON

**A**NNIE LAURIE, in addition to being famous as the first woman to man the barricades in defense of her class, the bourgeoisie, will also be famed for mis-calling her shots and mis-reading her history books.

Poor girl, how was Annie, the darlin', to know that the French Revolution didn't begin to get "hot" until the bourgeoisie awakened to the fact that "their own" government had sold them down the river of inflation—now called "devaluation"?

On some nice foggy day Annie might fake an authoritative interview with Robespierre or possibly Marat himself, who knows? Nothing is impossible to a Hearstian literate. By "cramming" another day—even a six-hour day would do—Annie may be able to draw inspiration for a column as a lesson for the domestic bourgeoisie. Or are they too nationalistic to be taught lessons from "those foreigners' " history?

Now Annie heaves a question in her column that deserves an answer. Who, when, what, and where are the bourgeoisie of the United States? That's what's bothering Annie. In fact, from her piece in the *Examiner* one could deduce that Annie was in doubt about the whole business. As far as she's concerned it's just another one of "those things" like "chickens, pots and garages", or, "forgotten men", "social security" and "justice"—"justice for all". Don't forget the all!

Just in case there might be another person running around in a daze, like Annie, and worrying over whether or not there are any bourgeoisie lurking about the old homesteads, we offer a few historical notes on the bourgeoisie, their native heath, their habits and some characteristic traits by which they may be easily recognized either coming or going, in the dark, or before the mirror.

The American branch of the bourgeoisie—both tame and wild—all originated from pre-Mayflower stock. They were the old original 117 per centers. Up to the turn of the last century they were a homogeneous mass. Easily housebroken, they were seldom known to bite and were always kind to children. So much for their virtues.

But, on the other hand, as liberals say, the true dyed-in-the-wool bourgeoisie, including the shoddy ones, are prone to cheat at solitaire. Only a small percentage forget to say their prayers, signal for left turns or send a card home on Mother's Day. The great majority have a sweet tooth for hokum candy. In fact, institutions are crowded with inmates whom a casual observer would judge to be above such addictions. So much for their vices.

Time—the inveterate marcher-onner—eventually brought the solid ranks of the bourgeoisie up to the year 1898—and their big crisis. An issue arose that split—nay, literally shattered their stolidity—yes, stolidity: Into three camps they divided, and all because of the momentous question—to eat, or not to eat sugar on their peas. A few years later another question arose to split the ranks further—why, when, and where should a solid gold tooth pick be used, if any?

We'll have to skip the years between that show the utter demoralization of the erstwhile bourgeoisie united front. Post war days find our domestic breed of bourgeoisie in either one of the following three groups: Big Bourgeois, Medium Bourgeois, or Little Bourgeois. For short just termed BB, MB, and LB. Sharply divided as they apparently are, they nevertheless

merge into one big class under the stress of suburban life, at the beaches, and in the cafeterias of Los Angeles.

In economics and mathematics the bourgeoisie claim no distinction other than being sort of dumber than usual, if you know what we mean. As an example we cite the statistical evidence presented by their Big Bull of all their Sacred Cows—Life Insurance. Only six of every one hundred persons in the United States to reach the age of sixty-five years can support themselves. Does that statement make the bourgeoisie stop, look and listen at his existing economic system? Hell's Bells, no! Didn't the great ex-President Hoover in a Palo Alto speech just tell us all about the virtues of our forefathers who made their own soap?

A good bourgeois never questions anything. Never would he take a good look around and say; "Huh! The twenty-two millions on charity have borne the brunt so far—but, I wonder who's next?"

In case that should happen though, we can expect to see the "good" bourgeois fall back on God. To him prayers are said and sacrifices are made—sometimes human sacrifices—lives of wage slaves, in case Annie doesn't get it. Generally speaking, prayers are in the first person and are pleas for individual salvation, pronto!

If memory serves me correctly it was only a few short months ago that Annie, the bourgeois bourgeoisie hunter, gushed in her column that Franklin D. was a messenger direct from Heaven with orders to save our American institutions, and "the system". At the time Annie was riding before the big wind—wing and wing—as the sailing term has it. But now, after the bourgeoisie have split apart into bewildered followers of bigger and better shouters, where does Annie stand?

The heavenly messenger stands rejected by millions of the faithful. And, though going into the 1936 battle with a four-billion-dollar war chest of the people's money, he is not, by any system of betting, anything above a five to one shot to win.

From the writings of anxious Annie, inferences are plain that for some unexplained reason the bourgeoisie God was not on the side of the twenty-two million relief clients. Answer—yes or no, Annie, and so why, or why not?

The Big Bourgeois, BB for short, is a product of evolution, or rather, of a mis-directed revolution. He tests exactly 117 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent pure. A great part is solid ivory—in fact, exactly 99 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent is pure Ivory.

A BB always instinctively feels that sweating workers, the actual wealth producers of this world, are sort of dumb clucks. Of late years the more philosophically minded BB's have been known to speculate idly on what is to happen when those wealth producers finally awaken to their true importance in the general scheme of things. If this business of BB's thinking out of turn like that should keep up, Annie will be the only one on the barricades the day of the big blow-up. Very disquieting, indeed. Very.

BB's are rugged individuals except for their glands, livers, kidneys and conscience. Individualists to the last—except, of course, where it "pays" to be otherwise. He "joins" things quite brazenly under the banner of rank opportunism. A BB left to his own resources would sell out his mother, dispossess



grandpappie, put the kids in an orphanage, and murder his wife—if business demanded the toll.

The zenith of a typical BB is timed to coincide with his induction into office as some sort of Grand Salamii, Palooki-ville Chapter Number Six and seven-eights. Life from then on is sweeter than sweet. A bowl of cherries!

And as the dirt bounces noisily off the lid of his pine box the bible pounders extol his virtues, soft pedal his vices and collect the next day. That, Annie, is the end of a perfect day, for a Bigger and Better Bourgeois. Isn't it cute?

The Medium Bourgeois, the common domestic variety of MB, is pockmarked from fear and scarred of soul. His conscience has been the victim of many a "long count". In his native bailiwick he exhibits a modicum of inherent cunning—of the low type—yet cunning withal. His ears wiggle and he invariably has an attack of chronic hangnails just at the critical moment in his career.

Racing on the road to riches he always forgets to check the tires. The BB's ahead of him throw dust in his eyes while the LB's, crowding him from the rear, attempt to squeeze him into the fence on each turn. He's nobody's friend. The grandstands look at their programs as he whizzes past. A dog's life—and dangerous! !

When not racing he takes his meals on the fly; his culture comes in "shots", and his recreation is postponed until the future. Neurotic, psychotic and myopic, we meet MB's on trains, ferry boats and in jails.

MB's are the friends and meal tickets for I. C. S. and the infamous five-foot shelves. A born gambler, the MB cannot compute the odds. He's sure to wind up as President of the firm—unless something happens. God forbid! Yeah, the MB's sort of chisel in on the BB's private God that way!

An MB is solid for his party. Semper Sapelis is his motto. With a heart of gold—unless off the gold standard, when his heart is lead—a "good" MB if lucky can expect to lose three fortunes before reaching the boneyard. Hokum is his diet and Valhalla is his goal!

A Little Bourgeois can always be spotted in a movie house. He's generally either crying onto his vest or spraying the gent ahead when he guffaws. He takes his art seriously and has a secret yen for money enough to play two wimmen at once. All in fun, of course. Good clean bourgeoisie amusement!

Either a rabid Republican 'cause his ancestors were, or a dumb Democrat 'cause it's the New Deal, he never loses faith in Santa Claus, Building & Moan Associations, or Chinese lotteries, and "feels sorry for the poor President who's trying so hard to help us poor people in our fight with Wall Street". Check.

The superstitions and pet hates of a run-of-the-mill Little Bourgeois would fill a big booklet. He cheers everything and everybody in parades and on holidays. With big feet and no sense of proportion he's drafted by his masters to fight their wars!

Sports pages are his fountain of knowledge. He's a walking, crawling, and sprawling cyclopedia of the Loves and Lives of Follywood Meteors, Comets and Duds. All aliens are "fur-rin" heathen and there's no place like Squeejee Corners, by Gum!

Eggs are always fresh if marked that way on the crate. Politicians are all statesmen and "there ain't a gonna be no more war". His destination is most any place and his eventual goal is unfit to print. Goo-bye, Annie!

## BOOKS

### A BEAUTIFUL BOOK

DAWN OVER SAMARKAND, the Rebirth of Central

Asia, by Joshua Kunitz. (Covici, Friede) \$3

(Reviewed by Lincoln Steffens)

A BEAUTIFUL title, suggestive of romance in far-away, ancient lands. It might be a deception and a snare. But it isn't. It's a beautiful book. And very enlightening. It's a prophecy for other places in backward Asia. It tells how the poor, superstitious, hopeless peoples of the hot interior of benighted Asia, even they had a revolution. Kunitz, the poet who tells it, uses the songs of the camel-drivers, peasant and petty merchants to add their poetry to his show and prove his matter-of-fact history and make it read like all poetry. I am so charmed by this scholar-reporter-historian that no one should trust my review. And it is only one of the first researches into post-revolution Asia. It is great, however, to get a first impression from a poet. He is not so untrustworthy as I am. Hard history of recent events is here. He tells, for instance, how the backward Mohammedans released by the Russian Revolution, revolted against their tyranny, found Communist leaders who started them right and then were driven out. The natives went back under their old leaders, the landowners, churches and bandits till these old grafters failed to maintain the united front, split up with their conflicting interests and began again to abuse the people. Then the people arose, drove the tyrants out, all of them, and set up again their revolutionary governments—not Communist-led. It was natural. Later again they recalled the Communists and the independent republic was built strong. And the poet-scholar tells how the tactful, patient, wise Reds so won the new freemen that they joined the U. S. S. R. This is typical of the other Asiatic countries, of the whole book. The enemy were there—the other backward countries, religion, oil, imperialism, but Kunitz treats them as the Asians did—briefly and without hatred. As if our civilization and culture need not darken the beautifulness of a book of beauty. Joshua Kunitz must be a tall, graceful, handsome man with long, delicate hands and perfectly lovely eyes if one may judge by his (ditto) book.

### WHAT'S BOGUS

COUNTERFEIT, by Arthur Kallet. (Vanguard Press)

\$1.50

(Reviewed by Rosalie James)

DO YOU take your hamburger with mustard or a dash of poison in the form of sodium sulphite? Do you prefer a dish of bran or sandpaper for breakfast? (Twenty-two rats liked the bran.) Are you one of those who are particular about what they buy and insist on the best? Then you'll be astonished to know that you, as an individual consumer, have very little to say in this matter of what you get for your money. It has already been decided for you by the manufacturer who is interested in increasing his income at your expense. If you don't believe this, Arthur Kallet's little exposé, *Counterfeit*, will illustrate the methodical consumer bilking that goes on as a result of large-scale advertising.

Perhaps you say; "That may be true but I buy only from



well-known national advertisers and this has no application to them—besides I insist on a guarantee." Mr. Kallet says: "The reader should note that the most adept counterfeiters are not the little fellows, but the great national advertisers whose skilful handiwork appears, year after year, unchecked by time, the depression, code of ethics, or the NRA." Moreover, the example of the "guaranteed part-wool" blanket, which boasts one thread of wool around the selva, will quickly explode your guarantee theory. The author adds: "Guaranteed to be part wool, but one little sheep would last forever."

For the consumer the result of such malpractices may be not only considerable loss of money, but in the purchase of some articles, such as foodstuffs and "cure-alls", loss of health. You'll find all these tricks of the trade thoroughly debunked as the discussion, accompanied by photographs of your favorite nostrums, amusingly commented upon by Mr. Kallet, shifts from beans and pineapple to nationally advertised soaps, beauty creams, dentifrices and antiseptics, from "vitamin" foods and milk to ear oil, fabrics, gasoline, oil burners, and laxatives. In addition, a few fabric tests are provided as means of detecting "goods counterfeiting", as well as recipes for the simple home preparation of products sold on the market at high prices.

The irate consumer, and any consumer will be irate after reading *Counterfeit*, will find here no new bogus remedy. He "must face the fact that goods counterfeiting is a part of the structure of our economic system, and cannot be ended by wishes, laws, or books like this one." As Mr. Kallet points out, although "standardization" will work for the big power companies or railroads "who can meet the producer on equal and often superior terms", the manufacturers who control legislation would never allow the passage of laws favorable to the individual consumer. "Goods counterfeiting is not an isolated phenomenon" but part of an "incurable disease in an economic organism built up to safeguard profits for the few who have wealth and power without regard for the welfare of the millions". It would seem that a little surgery might be an effective cure.

### SNAPPILY WRITTEN

A LONDON STORY, by George Buchanan (E. P. Dutton and Co.) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Karl Wyllis)

GEORGE BUCHANAN apparently is something of an idealist who, suddenly discovering that something ought to be done, has dashed to his typewriter to point very decorously the way out under the sugar coating of a novel. *A London Story*, his first, hits its high point when the hero explains that "Doubt is the great human attainment. It detaches us from the past, from mere habit. It enables us to live consciously in the present. If everyone suddenly doubted, we'd have a bloodless revolution in a day."

This is the speech of one of two brothers who, sensitive and confusedly aware that all is not well with the world, seeks explanation of capitalism's faults and a way through them to security and contentment. In contrast is the other brother who swallows blindly the beliefs and ideals of a fascist civilization and grabs his share as go-getter for a big department store. The capitalist dragon in turn swallows him for his pains.

The novel is snappily written and its chief merit is that the readers who shy at thinking may unwittingly absorb an idea

or two. Whether or not it will make any out and out converts is open to doubt, but at any rate it is a nice bit of what the fascists call "boring from within".

### DEFEATS ITSELF

SENTENCED TO LIFE, by Mary Agnes Hamilton.

(Houghton, Mifflin Co.) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Karl Wyllis)

MARY AGNES HAMILTON, former Member of Parliament, has written a 444-page novel, *Sentenced to Life*, to show what would happen if rebellious Left-Wingers attempt to upset the status quo by assassinating a Foreign Secretary who is leading Great Britain into war.

Jerry and Rosney, typical Bohemian pseudo-Socialists of upper-crust imagination, are Fed Up and decide to do something about it by bumping off the Hon. Mr. Nasby. They still, apparently, do not expect any way out, for suicide is to follow the killing. The bullet misses and the pair have to go on living in this screwy world; hence the title *Sentenced to Life*. The ensuing 300 pages go to prove that after all it was their mental state that made the world seem so haywire and when they find themselves it isn't such a mad old place after all, etc., etc. The book defeats itself, being too forced in its arty style, too wordy and too much just plain dry to convince anybody who has learned to doubt.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### REFUTING LIES

The fifth bulletin from Robert Merriman in Moscow was not received in time for publication in this issue, but we are gratified to have the following letter from him:

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

I have just received the copy of Pacific Weekly in which you made the announcement that my bulletins will be published in your magazine. I am very pleased to hear that my friends have arranged for their publication, since I requested that they be given as wide a circulation as possible. I have written these bulletins for people who have desired some first-hand information about the Soviet Union. After having written several of these, I received some Hearst clippings. These clippings clearly showed me that the Hearst press has no desire to print the truth about the Soviet Union. Hearst's false reports have made me so disgusted that I have decided to send out as much information as possible about real conditions as I see them.

Moscow, U. S. S. R.

July 17, 1935.

Robert H. Merriman

### PUTS HIM RIGHT

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

Mr. Karl Long finds me guilty of the serious error of praising John L. Spivak's *America Faces the Barricades*. (July



29) He condemns the book on these counts:

1. Spivak writes as a Liberal rather than an "honest" communist.
2. That he harbors the notion of an undefined "Public" in his mind.
3. That he says "when the newspapers almost had the 1,300,000 citizens of the Bay Area convinced the strike was Moscow-inspired the unions went out".
4. That he finds the American worker has an antipathy towards the word "communist".

On the first point, I should say that the surprising thing about *America Faces the Barricades* is that although the author may be a communist he writes of what he sees and not what, maybe, he would like to have seen. He may yet fall a victim to such doctrinaire criticism as Mr. Long's; but I recommend the book as a credible account of the state of mind of the American masses today. Radicals who are not convinced beforehand that the working class is already 100 per cent communist could profitably use it as a guide in the direction of their propaganda.

The book is a matter-of-fact recital, with very scant interpretation, of what those who consider themselves the "Public" think. It will not necessarily make converts (nor I presume does it intend to) of the un-class-conscious liberals to whom it is addressed. But it will certainly make such people have a greater respect for the accuracy of a reporter with an obvious left viewpoint. It would be well if my critic had such accuracy.

On page 285 he will find the following sentence (I have italicized the parts he omitted): "Once the propaganda barrage was well under way and the 1,300,000 citizens of the Bay Region almost convinced that the strike was Moscow-inspired, the employers collected strike-breakers to load and unload the ships tied up in the harbor." And on page 281 he might read:

*It is then that we realize our utter dependence upon those who do the work. That is what the San Francisco Bay region realized in the general strike in which 200,000 workers folded their arms. The 1,300,000 people living in the area, whose lives had run so smoothly, found themselves helpless without the activity of those who did the work.*

Does the American worker shy at the word "communist"? I prefer the observations of a crack reporter who has toured the country for eighteen months to that of a sedentary Berkeley resident.

Carmel, California

Harry Conover

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## A FRANK AND HONEST WORD

RE-PRINTED FROM PACIFIC WEEKLY, JANUARY 18, 1935

**P**ACIFIC WEEKLY is not a Communist magazine; it is not a Socialist magazine, or a Workers' or a Labor Union magazine.

PACIFIC WEEKLY is a radical magazine in every sense that the dictionary defines the word "radical".

Here is my Desk Standard definition:

"Proceeding from the root or foundation; essential; fundamental; thoroughgoing; unsparing; extreme."

There's something to tie to, and PACIFIC WEEKLY ties to it with avidity, even to the "extreme". What times have there been that call for more extreme thought, more extreme words, more extreme measures than the times we find ourselves in today?

If PACIFIC WEEKLY has a Communist or a Socialist tinge, or taint, it is because people of these faiths have something fundamental, essential, thoroughgoing, unsparing, extreme to say and also the ability and the courage to say it. These are times that try men's souls, and a solution for the ills that are upon us must come from somewhere. How better can we find it than by listening to those who believe that they have it; those who by study and training and experience are fitted to voice their expression of opinion and compel attention to their views?

It is elemental to hark back to the idea that the best way to relieve the pressure on a boiler is to open the safety valve. But the best way to relieve the pressure of present day thought, which eventually will lead to action, is to permit those who are thinking to voice their thoughts. PACIFIC WEEKLY is dedicated to this policy. It purposes to make itself a safety valve, a forum, for those who are honestly and sincerely endeavoring to find a way out for us in the present social and economic turmoil.

PACIFIC WEEKLY commends itself to those who are not afraid of the truth; who are not frightened by bugaboos; who do not let their sensibilities suffer shock from plain, unvarnished and honest statements of fact. PACIFIC WEEKLY commends itself to those who are brave and courageous enough to admit convictions which are not their convictions, faiths which are not their faiths, traditions which are not their traditions, beliefs which are not their beliefs—ah, yes, travail which is not their travail, poverty which is not their poverty, injustice which they are not suffering and tragedy which it has not been in their lives to bear.

There are these things. You can't shut your eyes and ears to them and clear your conscience of bigotry and intolerance. You cannot close your mind to the thoughts and beliefs and convictions of others. You who are radiantly certain of yourself may not deny the radiance of certainty in others. The time has passed when we accept without thought and conjecture the social system as it has existed for many generations behind us. We know that there is fault in it; that it has failed us. It has failed us even though you, yourself, are today no worse off materially than you were ten years ago, or even better off than you were then. You may have an equal income; you may be enjoying just as many comforts, you may be spending your leisure hours in just as joyful pursuits; but whether you realize it or not, you are skating on damned thin ice; ice that has been melted thin by the red hot anger and bit-

terness of those who are not so fortunate as you; those who have been struck down by the falling bricks of the collapsing social structure.

And you can't stand aside and yell "red" and "pink" and "parlor bolshevik" at men and women who no longer are limited to the unwashed and the illiterate. Many of you whose only claim to a standing in the community is that you dress well, pay your bills, own real estate, believe in patriotism, live up to your marriage vows, at least know where the town library is, and can trace your ancestry back to the Mayflower, are muttering "red" and thinking "red" at a surprisingly different mass of human beings than were the butt of your smug contempt ten and fifteen years ago. You're not muttering and sneering DOWN any more; you're muttering and sneering UP. You're tilting your heads back and straining your necks at Professors William P. Montague and John Dewey of Columbia University, at Chancellor Woodburn Chase and Professor Sidney Hook of New York University, at Dr. William E. Hocking of Harvard, at Professor C. M. Bakewell of Yale, at Dr. Daniel T. MacDougal of Carmel and Tucson, at Lincoln Steffens, Corliss Lamont and scores of others in this country, all of whose intellects are far superior to those of many of you patriots; all of whom are thinking men and women with backgrounds of high education and experience; all of whom see the trend of events about which most of you have little conception.

They realize the thin ice and they are trying to do something about it. Their methods may differ, and do, but they all have a common end in view. They are trying to arrest the thaw by thought and, if need be, action which will crystallize that thought. They are not content with sitting back and letting a situation take care of itself when they know that it will not take care of itself. They know, whether or not they have religious beliefs, that God will not do anything for us materially even though we have been placating him for nearly three hundred years on the very material surface of our money. They know that there is nothing to conjure with in the mere name of the United States; that this nation has no mystic powers and that no miracles are going to happen. The spirit and the courage of the Puritans will not help us now; the brilliance and statesmanship of Washington and Jefferson and Hamilton are no aid today; the magic wisdom of Abraham Lincoln cannot serve us.

I have been told that I am right, but that I am up against a stone wall. I want to suggest to those who think this that that stone wall isn't the impregnable structure it was ten or fifteen years ago; ask the Fleishhackers in San Francisco, or Mr. Giannini—they'll tell you. And let me tell you that if they want to bolster it up again, or give it any semblance of steadfastness once more, they had better give ear to these Communists, these Socialists, these workers, this rank and file, and the intelligent men and women who find themselves on their side for the public good, to save the United States of America for democracy, for decency, for justice and for right.

It is to this principle, to this end that PACIFIC WEEKLY is dedicated—fundamental, thoroughgoing, unsparing, essential, extreme—that's radicalism.

W. K. BASSETT  
Editor and Publisher